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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 001104

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: FDLR REPATRIATION INITIATIVE UPDATE

REF: A) KINSHASA 1100 B) KINSHASA 1099 C) KINSHASA 1078

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reason 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C) Summary: Several ambassadors met with Presidency Special Advisor for Security Kaputo July 6 for an update regarding GDRC activities to achieve repatriation of FDLR members to Rwanda. Kaputo attributed the delay of a GDRC statement on the subject to an extended GDRC assessment seminar, and acknowledged that the FDLR statement issued June 25 was more conditional than had been earlier hoped. Nonetheless, he indicated that the GDRC has been proceeding with talks focused on FDLR field commanders Amani and Omega, and believes they are ready and able to deliver significant returnees. Indeed, he indicated, hard-liners are attempting to isolate Amani through overt military attacks, as reflected in intra-FDLR fighting (ref a). The ambassadors again urged a strong GDRC statement as soon as possible, and continued work toward a GDRC capability for meaningful military pressure. We may wish to consider a USG statement to encourage repatriation, pending the timing and contents of the promised GDRC communique. End summary.

2. (C) The ambassadors and charges of the U.S., Belgium, Holland, and the U.K., and UN SRSG Swing met with Presidency Special Advisor for Security Samba Kaputo late afternoon of July 6 to discuss the current situation regarding the FDLR. Kaputo was accompanied by several other GDRC officials. SRSG Swing opened the substantive discussion by noting that the GDRC statement that Kaputo had earlier promised (ref c) had not been issued, and inquired about its status.

3. (C) Kaputo reiterated that the GDRC intends to issue a statement, and attributed the delay to a much-prolonged GDRC transition assessment seminar which involved all government ministers for over a week. Nonetheless, he reported that the Supreme Defense Council had met earlier this week to discuss and approve a new draft text, and that Defense Minister Onusumba had been charged with presenting a revised draft to the Council of Ministers for approval. Kaputo indicated that could happen as early as this Friday, July 15.

4. (C) In the meantime, Kaputo indicated that the GDRC has been pursuing contacts with FDLR field commanders to promote repatriation. Having concluded that FDLR President Ignace Murwanashyaka could not or would not produce any positive results, the government had identified FDLR South Division commander Amani as a potentially useful interlocutor. Kaputo said that the GDRC had conducted an assessment as to whether Amani could be relied upon to take serious action, and whether he had any apparent support. Their conclusion was that Amani had the support of the great majority of southern division FDLR members, and that he was serious about pursuing repatriation. Through Amani, contact was also made with FDLR North Division commander Omega, who indicated sympathy with Amani's position. Initial plans were being formulated to regroup scattered FDLR elements prior to going to MONUC-supervised transition centers, and then on to Rwanda. The June 25 FDLR statement was a part of this process.

5. (C) Seeing real progress toward repatriation, Kaputo said that FDLR hard-liners, particularly those in the FDLR general headquarters under the direction of General Mudakumura, had been alarmed. Armed FDLR groups under their direction apparently attacked Col. Amani and his forces the afternoon of July 5 (as reported ref b) in an attempt to forestall further action. Should Amani win that engagement, Kaputo added, his hand would be even further strengthened, and the GDRC would pursue repatriation with him and his allies. Kaputo reported that GDRC information suggested Amani had the upper hand in the ongoing clash as of July 6.

6. (C) Several ambassadors noted that the June 25 FDLR statement was more conditional than Kaputo had indicated would be the case. Kaputo acknowledged the fact, attributing it to Amani's sense that he could not convey a sense of total capitulation and retain credibility with the FDLR troops or fellow officers. All the ambassadors urged the GDRC to issue its promised communique in as strong terms as possible, and as quickly as possible. The reported fighting on the ground only underscored the need for an immediate public GDRC statement. Kaputo accepted the suggestion without comment.

7. (C) Responding to other questions, Kaputo said that there

has been no recent direct Congo/Rwanda government contact regarding the FDLR. He indicated that he believed that such contact should go through the international community.<sup>8</sup> The ambassadors collectively pushed back, emphasizing the need for direct Kinshasa/Kigali communication. Kaputo also reiterated his view of the importance of the Pilotage and Monitoring Committees, the former to consist of two representatives each from the GDRC, GOR, and FDLR, and the latter composed of members of the international community, as agreed in the last Tripartite meeting in Lubumbashi.

18. (C) SRSG Swing noted that MONUC had launched Operation Falcon Sweep (ref b), an initial probing action to gain information, provide experience, and increase pressure on the FDLR. Kaputo confirmed that the GDRC continues to pursue a plan for coordinated FARDC/MONUC military operations directed against the FDLR, but noted that FDRF forces are not yet ready to initiate offensive operations. The ambassadors encouraged planning and preparations to move forward as quickly as possible.

19. (C) Comment: While the GDRC assessment seminar did indeed delay many things, possibly including the GDRC statement, the real story more likely was GDRC indecision or lack of internal agreement regarding the specifics or form of the statement. The project still seems to be on the table, however, despite the fact that the overall sequence and form is no longer that which Kaputo earlier described. The intra-FDLR fighting is a new element that bears monitoring as to its significance and outcome. If it appears that FDLR commanders are emerging from that, however, with an interest in repatriation, and if the GDRC issues quickly a sufficiently useful statement, we may wish to consider a USG statement that could support further repatriation movement. The Belgian and British representatives at the July 6 meetings indicated that their respective governments might be interested in similar statements as well. The International Committee to Support the Transition (CIAT) is another potential mechanism for a supportive statement. End comment.

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